Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CARACA 08492 252258Z ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 PM-03 SP-02 L-01 SAB-01 INR-05 PRS-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 CCO-00 /038 W

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Z 252159Z AUG 77 ZFF4 FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 0000

CONFIDENTIAL CARACAS 8492

EO 11652 GDS TAGS: PDIP PN VE

SUBJ:SIGNING CEREMONY FOR PANAMA CANAL TREATY

REF: CARACAS 8302

ARA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN; VENEZUELA DESK FOR AMBASSADOR VAKY

- 1. I WAS CALLED TO FOREIGN MINISTRY AFTERNOON AUGUST 25
 TO MEET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER WHO SAID THAT HE AND
 PRESIDENT PEREZ HAD BEEN SURPRISED TO LEARN FROM A
 FRONT PAGE STORY IN AUG 25 ISSUE OF MORNING DAILY
 EL NACIONAL THAT PANAMA CANAL TREATY SIGNING CEREMONY
 WOULD TAKE PLACE SEP 7. PRESIDENT PEREZ, HE SAID,
 DELIGHTED THAT CEREMONY WOULD TAKE PLACE THIS SOON, BUT,
 IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR, REPORTED REFTEL, NO
 SPECIFIC DATE HAD BEEN MENTIONED.
- 2. FOREIGN MINISTER EXPLAINED THAT KING OF SPAIN ARRIVING AT 1700 SEPTEMBER 7 TO CELEBRATE ON SEP 8 THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF THE CAPTAINCY GENERAL OF VENEZUELA. KING DEPARTS CARACAS SEP 10. PRESIDENT PEREZ, HE EXPLAINED, MUST MEET KING JUAN CARLOS. CONFIDENTIAL

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3. FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ
WANTS VERY MUCH TO BE PRESENT AT SIGNING CEREMONY AND
ALSO TO MEET PRIVATELY WITH PRESIDENT CARTER.
FOREIGN MINISTER WONDERED WHY CEREMONY COULD NOT BE
HELD SEP 5 OR 6. I EXPLAINED ABOUT LABOR DAY
AND DIFFICULTIES IN GETTING ALL SENATORS BACK TO

WASHINGTON SEP 6. IN MY PRESENCE, FOREIGN
MINISTER PHONED PRESIDENT AND LAID OUT PROBLEM.
PRESIDENT SUGGESTED HE COULD FLY TO WASHINGTON
SEP 6 FOR A SIGNING CEREMONY TO TAKE PLACE MORNING OF SEP 7 SO THAT HIS AIRCRAFT COULD TAKE OFF
NO LATER THAN 12 NOON THAT DAY. IN THAT WAY, HE CULD
GREET KING JUAN CARLOS AT 1700. PRESIDENT PEREZ ALSO
SAID HE WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE MEETING WITH
PRESIDENT CARTER EVENING OF SEP 6 OR EARLY
MORNING SPP 7. HE ALSO PREPARED ACCEPT INVITATION
FOR ANY SORT OF GATHERING WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER MIGHT
BE HAVING WITH LATIN AMERICAN HEADS OR CHIEFS OF STATE
EVENING SEP 6.

4. I PROMISED TO TRANSMIT THIS INFORMATION TO WASHINGTON SOONEST AND TRIED TO GIVE FOREIGN MINISTER SOME IDEA OF DIFFICULTIES IN RESCHEDULING SIGNING CEREMONY FROM EVENING SEP 7 TO MORNING THAT DAY. FRECHETTE

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